



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Health, Education, and Human Services Committee  
discusses status report from the Navajo Area Agency on Aging**

**WINDOW ROCK** – The Health, Education, and Human Services Committee received a report on Wednesday, related to the possible reorganization and regionalization of the Navajo Area Agency on Aging.

The Navajo Area Agency on Aging is housed under the Navajo Nation Division of Health, tasked with ensuring that Navajo elders receive all available benefits and services such as: Dine Elderly Protection, Foster Grandparents Program, Navajo Family Caregiver Program, Food Delivery, Nutrition Services, and Ombudsman.

Rosalyn Curtis, director of Navajo Area Agency on Aging, updated the HEHSC members on the agency's progress to address a recommendation from the Navajo Nation Auditor General to revise the service mapping.

"NAAA was asked to increase employee work hours without the additional funds to do so," said Curtis. "As an effort to do that, we have made changes to the service mapping for food deliveries."

HEHSC member Council Delegate Walter Phelps (Cameron, Coalmine Canyon, Leupp, Tolani Lake, Tsidi To ii) inquired as to whether the Nation's senior citizen centers would be impacted by the mapping revisions.

"I am unsure how familiar council delegates are with the operation of senior citizen centers," said Delegate Phelps. "However, we must continue being proactive in modifications to direct services for our elderly."

Advocating for his chapter, Council Delegate Joshua Lavar Butler (Tó Nanees Dizi) said Tuba City residents are unhappy with NAAA.

"I am unsure if NAAA has truly been proactive in improving services to the elderly in Tuba City," said Delegate Butler. "I am going to request that NAAA secure a new accountant to ensure you are working to do so."

Council Delegate Kenneth Maryboy (Mexican Water, Aneth, Teecnospos, Tólikan, Red Mesa) said he was alarmed by the report and emphasized the importance of continuing food deliveries to very rural areas of the Nation.

“My chapters are experiencing a serious drought, NAAA employees must continue checking on the elderly to make sure they’re safe,” said Delegate Maryboy. “Unfortunately we have some elderly people who are not monitored at all.”

HEHSC chair Council Delegate Jonathan Hale (Oak Springs, St. Michaels) assured Curtis, that the HEHSC would work with NAAA throughout the budget process to ensure that the elderly are not neglected.

“It’s very sad to know that we have elderly who rely on the visits from NAAA employees,” said Delegate Hale. “If the committee and NAAA continue communicating with each other during the budget season, we can secure funding for services like eye glasses, food delivery, and dentures.”

HEHSC members voted 2-2 on the report, requiring NAAA to provide a follow-up report with Larry Curley, director of Navajo Division of Health.

HEHSC’s next meeting is tentatively scheduled for July 10 at 1 p.m. at the Dilkon Chapter House.

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